

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

TS #102244

~~TOP SECRET~~

44

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

15 August 1955

ONE INTERNAL USE ONLY

STAFF MEMORANDUM No. 50-55

SUBJECT: Draft Post Mortem on 11-6-55 "Probable Intelligence Warning  
of Soviet Attack on the US through Mid-1958," 1 July 1955

1. NIE 11-6-55, approved by the IAC on 1 July 1955, was essentially an updating of the previous warning estimate, NIE 11-8-54. In coordinating this estimate the area of primary disagreement continued to center around the degree of specific advance warning intelligence was likely to provide under various scales of air attack. In one instance the Air Force entered a formal dissent. Disagreement stemmed primarily from divergences in view as to the current and probable future Soviet capabilities for surprise air attack, and the nature and extent of the problems inherent in the interpretation of warning indicators.

2. In many respects this problem involves questions of judgement or estimates of future capabilities upon which little or no factual evidence can be brought to bear. The nature and extent of these differences, however,

DOCUMENT NO. 2  
NO CHANGE IN CLASS.  
☐ DECLASSIFIED  
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S (C)  
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 11/90  
AUTH: HR 70-2  
DATE: 11 MARCH 80 REVIEWER: 018557

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

also indicated certain significant intelligence deficiencies, particularly as regards the current level of Soviet air activity, training programs, and air base development. These aspects of the problem bear upon the vital question of Soviet operational effectiveness and thus capability for surprise attack. A priority intelligence effort is currently underway in this field. If vigorously pursued some further narrowing of the intelligence gaps can possibly result, although, short of a major change in Soviet security practice or some intelligence breakthrough, no dramatic improvement is to be expected.

3. Since the nature of the warning problem calls for a net evaluation, it is also essential that US techniques and capabilities, current and probable future/<sup>be</sup>carefully considered. The potential contributions of the governmental agencies, as well as special intelligence bearing on Soviet capabilities, probably best able to supply such information were not fully exploited. Moreover, an NIE on warning is in large part an evaluation of the prospective performances of these agencies and they should be permitted to participate in it.

#### RECOMMENDATION

4. The Board therefore recommends that when estimates of early warning capabilities are under consideration the National Indications Center and primary sources of special intelligence be more closely integrated into

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

the process and they be invited to: (a) submit preliminary contributions for review by the IAC agencies; and (b) participate in the coordination process as appropriate.

25X1



- 3 -

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~